



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Mission Statement

Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools, in partnership with parents, community, and the Catholic Church, provide students with an excellent education and a solid faith formation. Students will know the Faith, share the Faith, and live the Faith

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed for coaches, student-athletes, and parents to help define the role of educational athletics in the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools. The basic goal of interscholastic athletics is defined and the policies and regulations necessary to achieve these goals are presented. It is imperative that athletes, parents, and coaches have knowledge of this material.

"The Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools is dedicated to personal, athletic, and academic excellence and is committed to providing an accepting and nurturing Catholic Christian environment. BCACS fosters the development of faith by building a strong relationship with God through spiritual formation at all levels and in every part of our schools."

A committee of teachers, coaches, and athletic director initially developed the standards presented in this handbook. The material was compiled, reviewed, and revised by the committee prior to being adopted by the BCACS school board and pastors. The document will be reviewed by the committee each year and revisions and amendments made as needed.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The athletic program in the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools is a vital part of the total educational program and an integral part of the extracurricular activities. Athletics affirm, promote, and model Catholic values and engage student-athletes fully in mind, body, and spirit. Through athletic participation, we strive to help our students accomplish the following goals:

Participation in athletics offers unique lessons and experiences that prepare students for life in the community, workplace, and family. Students will participate in athletics with the long-term goal of preparing for a life of faith and service to others.

God has bestowed skills, abilities, and talents upon each of us. Students will develop known and unknown talents that promote confidence, self-discipline, leadership, and an appreciation of physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices.

The development of well-rounded, faith-centered individuals, as well as the safety and welfare of our student-athletes, is the primary focus of the athletic programs at the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools. These programs complement the academic and spiritual focus of the school and strive to assist students in reaching their full potential as witnesses to Christ's teachings.

TO THE PARENTS

Your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and as parents; you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Your family's interest in this phase of our school program is gratifying. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assists students in personal adjustments and enhances classroom learning.

We who are concerned with the educational development of students through athletics feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets the student's needs for

self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and increased responsibility. These are the reasons we place such stress on good training habits. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from the team. This concept of self-discipline is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of the team. There is no place in high school athletics for students who will not discipline their minds and bodies for rigorous competition. (We are striving for excellence and do not want our athletes to compromise with mediocrity.)

The BCACS Administration is committed to certain responsibilities and obligations, as follows:

1. To provide adequate equipment and facilities;
2. To provide well-trained coaches;
3. To provide equalized contests with skilled officials; and
4. To provide adequately supervised transportation.

Likewise, we feel that athletes, parents and coaches have committed to certain responsibilities and obligations. We feel that the specific policies and guidelines outlined in this handbook are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the Athletic Department to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school. These rules can only be achieved through communication with the parent. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic publication for coaches, students, and parents.

TO THE COACHES

The National High School Athletic Coaches has issued the following Coaches Code of Conduct: As a professional educator and leader, the high school Coach or Athletic Director will:

- Exemplify the highest moral character as a role model for young people.
- Recognize the individual worth and reinforce the self-image of each team member.
- Encourage and assist team members to set personal goals to achieve their highest academic potential.
- Create a set of training rules for athletes, which reflect the positive values of abstaining from the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Strive to develop the qualities of leadership, initiative, and good judgment in each team member.
- Communicate program goals and objectives to parents through a mandatory parent meeting.
- Provide a safe environment for practice and competition.
- Gain awareness of the importance of prevention, care, and treatment of athletic injuries.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the game official.
- Teach and abide by the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- Build and maintain ethical relationships with coaches and administrators.
- Strive for excellence in coaching skills and techniques through professional improvement.
- Promote personal fitness and good nutrition.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

- Encourage a healthy respect for the overall athletic program and its vital role in education.
- Communicate team results and other important athletic events/activities to the media.
- Recognize that each sport is part of a total athletic and educational program at BCACS.
- Work with other coaches to build upon necessary skills throughout the program.
- Responsible for attending Protecting God's Children workshop and fulfilling other responsibilities associated with working with students in a school setting. The coach is also responsible for any assistant coaches or volunteer coaches to attend the workshop and fulfill other requirements.

TO THE ATHLETE

Being a member of an athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes and our school. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. Over many years, our squads have achieved more than their share of league and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and won All-Conference and All-State honors.

It will be challenging to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When a St. Philip athlete wears the colors of our school, it is believed that you not only understand our traditions but also are willing to assume the responsibilities needed to uphold our traditions. However, the contributions that you make as an athlete should be a satisfying accomplishment for you and your family.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden yourself and develop strength of character. As an athlete, you owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your high school experiences. Your studies and your participation in extracurricular activities, as well as in sports, prepare you for life as an adult.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR SCHOOL

Another responsibility you assume as a member of a team at St. Philip Catholic Central is to your school. BCACS will not maintain its position as having an outstanding system unless you do your best in whatever activity in which you engage. By participating in athletics to the maximum of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of our school.

As an athlete, you assume a leadership role when you are on the athletic squad. The student body knows you. You are on stage with the spotlight on you. The student body, the community and other communities judge our school by the conduct and attitude of our athletes, both on and off the playing field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Make St. Philip Catholic Central proud of you and our community proud of our school through your conduct on the playing field.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS

As a squad member, you also bear a heavy responsibility to your home. If you never give your parents anything to be ashamed of, you will have measured up to the ideal. When you know in your heart that you have lived up to all of the training rules, that you have practiced to the best of your ability every day, and that you have played the game “all out” you can keep your self-respect and your family can be justly proud of you.

The younger students in the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools are watching you. They will copy you in many ways. Do not do anything to let them down. Set good examples for them.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR TEAM

As a squad member, you have made a commitment to a team. Missing practice or games beyond illness, or becoming academically ineligible takes away from the team concept. As a team member, it is your responsibility to always give 100% in the classroom and on the playing field.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

WEEKLY

Eligibility will be checked every Tuesday by 8:00 am and will start with the fourth week of each semester. Athletes must be passing all classes—60% or above. A student is not permitted to participate in any competition the week that he/she is ineligible. The student is required to attend practices and be present for competitions that he/she is ineligible. Ineligible players are still bound to the rules and policies outlined in the Athletic Handbook.

If a student-athlete is on the ineligible list three times during the semester the student-athlete will be dismissed from the team for the remainder of that sports season and will not be eligible for any end-of-season awards.

SEMESTER

Final grades are calculated at the end of each semester. If a student fails a class (59% or less) at the end of a semester, he/she will not be permitted to play in the first 20% of the games in the next semester. The student is required to attend practices and be present for competitions that he/she is ineligible. Ineligible players are still bound to the rules and policies outlined in the Athletic Handbook.

The MHSAA minimum academic standard for athletic eligibility states that a student must pass 66% (5 of 7 classes). Students who are failing to meet the minimum standard at the end of each semester are ineligible from the day grades are reported at the term end through and including the 60th scheduled school day. If a student is still not passing after the 60th day the student is still ineligible. Deficiencies in credits may be made up during a subsequent semester, summer session, or night school.

NOTE: Refer to the St. Joseph Middle School Handbook for eligibility rules specific to middle school student-athletes.

PROCEDURE FOR QUITTING A SPORT

Students wishing to be released from a sport during the season (after the games have started) must arrange for a meeting with the coach and the Athletic Director (parents are encouraged to be present) and express their reasons for wanting to leave the team.

PHYSICALS

Each student participating in athletics is required to have an MHSAA physical card on file in the office. Only physicals given after April 15th of the previous school year will be accepted for the current school year. Along with individual doctor offices, physicals are given each spring by Battle Creek Health Systems for a nominal fee. In addition, the St. Philip Athletic Department will provide physicals before practices officially begin for a nominal fee. No student can begin practice without a physical. Physical cards must be in the office and completely filled out in order for an athlete to participate. Practicing without a physical will result in a loss of 20% of the season.

PARTICIPATION FEE

Each year a participation fee must be paid. This fee covers the current school year. It is expected that participation fees be paid before an athlete begins practicing. However, calling the Athletic Director can provide payment plans. Participation fees can now be part of your SMART Tuition Payment.

The participation fee doesn't guarantee your son/daughter playing time.

APPEARANCE

All athletes will be expected to be neatly and appropriately dressed and groomed when traveling to and from athletic contests during competition. No part or aspect of an athlete's appearance should in any way impede or impair his/her ability to neither complete nor endanger his/her safety. Coaches will be given the acceptable game day dress code from the Athletic Director prior to the start of a season.

All uniforms must be washed after each contest.

YEAR-ROUND TRAINING RULES AND REGULATIONS

Participation in athletics is a privilege. Students have to decide if they want to be athletes. If you do wish to be an athlete, you need to follow a simple set of training rules, which the athletic department believes to be fair, and in the best interest of the student-athlete. Any deviation from the accepted training rules marks one as unwilling to make a commitment.

Use of Tobacco And Alcoholic Beverages

Research emphasizes that the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages is physically harmful. The harm done by this is not only a health problem it is also illegal. The school community follows the progress of athletes, and any deviation from the accepted training rules marks one as unwilling to pay the price. If one squad member breaks the rules, it is a bad reflection on the whole team.

The use of tobacco and/or alcoholic beverages, in any form, is prohibited at any time, in or out of season.

Use of Drugs, Tobacco, and/or Alcohol

Simply stated, drug abuse is the consumption of any chemical substance or the smoking of some plant derivatives for the purpose of mood modification. The use or misuse of drugs is not only a social problem; it is against the law. The use and/or possession of any illegal drugs are prohibited at any time, in or out of season.

1. Violations - The following are violations of the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools training code and school handbook. (see 3.7-3.11 of the school handbook):
 - a. The possession, distribution and/or drinking of alcohol.
 - b. The use, possession and/or sale or distribution of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia in any manner. (except as medically prescribed). Nicotine, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, vapes, or supplies and accessories. Drugs: Any drug, including illegal drugs, marijuana, inhalants, legal prescription and over-the-counter drugs used or possessed or distributed for other than legitimate medical reasons, counterfeit (look-alike) substances and tobacco. Drug Paraphernalia: Equipment or apparatus designed for or used for the purpose of measuring, packaging, distributing, or facilitating the use of drugs.
 - c. Being charged with the commission of any crime (misdemeanor or felony).
2. Coverage – 365 days a year
3. Area of Jurisdiction – Violations that occur on or off school property in this community or another, shall result in the same disciplinary action against the person violating the policy or rule.
4. Penalties – Violations of the Drug, alcohol, and/or tobacco policies will result in the following progression of penalties:

1st offense: Loss of 50% of the season and option of in-school counseling and/or professional treatment. Professional treatment is at the student's expense.

2nd offense: Loss of one (1) calendar year of athletic participation and the option of in-school counseling and/or professional treatment. Professional treatment is at the student's expense.

3rd offense: Loss of athletes high school athletic career and option of in-school counseling and/or professional treatment. Professional treatment is at the student's expense.

The season is defined by the regular season contest dates.

PARTIES

Students attending parties where drugs and alcohol are present are at risk of violating training rules. Choosing to stay at such a party even though you are not participating in alcohol consumption and or substance abuse is subject to breaking training rules.

EJECTIONS FROM CONTESTS

The St. Philip Athletic Department will suspend any athlete or coach ejected from a contest as per MHSAA rules plus an additional contest date.

Fans ejected from an athletic contest will be suspended from attendance at home or away contests for two weeks.

TRAVEL

Behavior on all away trips holds the same expectations as in the classroom as stated in the disciplinary handbook. Food and beverages on the bus are prohibited unless prior approval has been given. It is the responsibility of the students and the coaches that the bus is clean and that all trash is picked up and taken off the bus. A coach is required to ride the bus on all trips unless he/she has permission from the Athletic Director.

TRANSPORTATION

Team members must travel to and from contests in an authorized school-provided vehicle, except in situations of emergency with permission of the coach or athletic director, or if arrangements are made prior to the game and approved by the athletic director.

Coaches will make the team aware of bus times. If athletes miss the bus they will not play in that particular contest. The coach/athletic director will review emergency situations and an exception may be made, if appropriate.

Riding Home with Parents

Students who wish to ride home from an athletic event with their parents or parent designee must have prior approval from the Athletic Director and bring a note from a parent to the coach. We encourage team togetherness, however, we are aware that families may have plans that require special considerations. Under no circumstances can an athlete ride to or from games with anyone other than an adult designated by their parent(s). Athletes are not permitted to drive themselves to and from athletic events in which they are participants unless traveling to a game at Battle Creek Central, Lakeview, Harper Creek and Pennfield.

WEATHER POLICY

It is recommended that there will be voluntary varsity practices on snow days or days when school is canceled. All middle school and freshman practices will be canceled. Varsity coaches will be responsible for notifying players if a practice is not going to be held. All practices at all levels will be canceled in the case of a Tornado Warning or other weather that is deemed potentially harmful to students. Appropriate precautions will be taken if a Tornado Warning occurs once practice is in session.

INVENTORY

All equipment and uniforms are the property of the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools. All coaches are required to inventory all equipment and uniforms and record all equipment and uniforms issued to all players. Equipment and uniforms must be turned in at the end of the season. The athletic director will be informed of any missing equipment and/or uniforms. A replacement charge will be issued to any students that fail to turn in their uniforms and/or equipment. Outstanding obligations must be taken care of before being allowed to participate in the next sport. Seniors must take care of all outstanding obligations before graduation.

LOCKER ROOM

It is the responsibility of the students and the coaches that the locker room is kept clean. This is required for both at-home and away contests. The locker room must be left in the same condition as when you entered the locker room. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of the students in the locker room and the physical condition after every practice and contest.

LOCKER ROOM PROCEDURES

1. An athlete is responsible for his/her valuables. An athlete should have a lock for his/her locker and the locker must be locked. All clothes and equipment should be put into lockers after every practice and game. Anything not in a locker will be thrown out.
2. Conduct in the locker room should reflect the mature judgment of young athletes. Horseplay will not be tolerated.
3. When an athlete leaves the shower room, showers must be turned completely off, home or away.
4. Team managers should be treated with respect at all times.
5. All phones/cameras, camera phones or similar technology are prohibited in any bathroom or locker room.
6. Any destruction of our locker room or an opponent's locker room will result in an immediate suspension of two games.

TEAM RULES

The head coach, in consultation with the Athletic Director and Principal, may suspend an athlete for a period of time or dismiss an athlete from the team for violation of team rules or insubordination if the head coach feels that such action is in the best interest of the team and the athletic program.

PLAYING TIME PHILOSOPHY

BCACS is committed to offering an athletic program that will benefit our students in many ways throughout their careers and into life. This program should be an extension of the classroom. Consequently, we have developed a philosophy for team sports playing time that will best enhance our athletic program and service our student-athletes simultaneously.

1. Development Stage (middle school and freshman teams)

The optimum goals at this stage include teaching fundamentals of the sport, emphasizing sportsmanship and providing practice and game-playing time for all participants. Winning can be discussed to build team pride, but should not be stressed to circumvent the original aforementioned goals.

1. Post Developmental Stage (JV team)

Coaches should balance student-athlete participation with the success of the team at this stage. Fundamentals in practice and sportsmanship are still goals for all participants. During games, personnel strategies can be made by the coaches to aid the success of the entire team. Coaches will try to provide playing time to all participants. Playtime will not be equal.

1. Varsity Stage (varsity teams)

The success of the team is the main goal at this stage. Student-athletes should learn that in varsity athletics all participants are working together for the good of the unit. This is a lifetime skill. Exclusively the coaching staff handles game participation, although playing time will be provided for as many student-athletes as possible. Coaches should stress to all participants that

each is an important contributor to the team in many ways, but playing time cannot be afforded equally to all. Maximum student-athlete game participation is stressed but not mandated at this level.

ATTENDANCE

School attendance: In order to participate in games and practices a student must be in school all day. If a student arrives 10 minutes after the start of class, he/she is considered an unexcused absence. Prior excused absences with documentation such as, but not limited to, medical, dental, funeral, court and other emergency situations with the athletic directors' approval will be permitted. Chronic conditions (migraine, asthma, allergies and so forth) with documentation will be taken into consideration.

In-school suspension: A student will not be eligible to practice or participate in games on suspension days. They are required to be at the game and sit with the team but are not to dress for the sport (Example: suspension on Monday eligible on Tuesday).

Out-of-school suspension: A student serving an out-of-school suspension is not eligible to practice or play in any game on suspension days.

Game and practice attendance: Absence from a game or practice for any excused absence will not result in a consequence of any form. An excused absence is an absence recognized by the school as excusable, documentation must be provided. Emergency situations and special circumstances will be reviewed and determined by the athletic director. Examples include: Excused – Medical, Dental, Court, Funeral, College Visitation, Illness and Family Vacation with prior permission. (Having to work is not considered an excused absence.)

Unexcused – Does not fit one of the Excused categories as outlined above.

Consequences of unexcused absences:

Cannot play first game date after an unexcused absence

AWARDS

All athletes who successfully complete a sports season will be recognized for their accomplishments. Completed sport:

- 1st varsity/junior varsity sport receives a P and numerals
- For all additional varsity letters, the athlete will receive a chevron for the sport for they earned a letter.
- All varsity and junior varsity letter winners will receive a certificate recognizing the successfully completed season.
- Athletes who competed successfully in the same sport for three years will receive a certificate.
- Athletes who competed successfully in the same sport all four years will receive a plaque.

Each sport recognizes individuals for the following awards: Most Valuable, Most Improved, Best Competitor and either Father Owens (boys) or Sister Therese Mary (girls) awards. Individual medals are voted on by the coaches of each sport. Some sports may have additional individual awards.

DUAL PARTICIPATION

Dual participation is defined as actively participating in two sports simultaneously during one season.

To be eligible for dual participation students must meet with the athletic director to discuss the feasibility of dual participation. The athletic director will determine if the student is a candidate based on ability and academic status. If the student is approved he/she must sign a declaration stating a 'priority sport.' In case of a conflict between two sports, the 'priority sport' will take precedence.

It is assumed that students applying for dual participation are willing to put in the practice hours required to remain proficient in the minor sport.

The guidelines regulating this policy are as follows:

1. Student-athletes may participate in two sports in a season provided they have the consent of parents and each of the coaches of the sports.
2. The student-athlete must indicate a "priority sport." If there happens to be a contest conflict date between the two sports, the student-athlete will participate in the "priority sport".
3. Details on practice times and game participation will be worked out with the student-athlete and the two coaches in congruence with athletic policies.
4. If a student-athlete quits one sport after the start of the season they will have to sit two contest dates of the other sports playing.

SIGNATURE PAGE

As an athlete for the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools, I agree to adhere to its rules and regulations. I believe that I should be a positive representative for St. Philip Catholic Central, the Diocese of Kalamazoo and the City of Battle Creek.

Signature of Athlete

Grade

Date

Having read and understood the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools Code of Conduct for Athletes, I/we agree to cooperate with the school in guiding our son/daughter towards living up to the rules and regulations.

Signature(s) of Parent/Guardian

Date

This form must be returned to the St. Philip Catholic Central High School office before a student-athlete can participate in an athletic competition.